

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (**currently amended**): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column comprising

a female member ~~adapted for~~ slidably receiving a male member therein, said female and male members having a substantially triangular shape with blunt vertexes, and ~~at least one a~~ plurality of metal strip strips that ~~is~~ are separate from the male member fitted therebetween, each of said metal strips having an uneven contact surface, characterized in that each of said metal ~~strip strips~~ is fitted between the male member and the female member and inside at least one recess in a continuous fastening cage clamped to the external surface of said male member, the recesses being arranged on the fastening cage to correspond to the sides of the triangular shape of the female and male members.

Claim 2 (previously presented): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that said cage is clamped to the outside of the male member by deformations on the lateral surface thereof.

Claim 3 (cancelled)

Claim 4 (cancelled)

Claim 5 (**currently amended**): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column comprising:

a female member ~~adapted for~~ slidingly receiving a male member therein, said female and male members having a substantially triangular shape with blunt vertexes;

~~at least one~~ a plurality of metal ~~strip strips~~ that is are separate from the male member, each of the metal strips having an uneven contact surface; and

a continuous fastening cage fitted between the male member and the female member, said fastening cage having ~~at least one recess~~ a plurality of recesses, said recesses being arranged on the fastening cage to correspond to sides of the triangular shape of the female and male members, said fastening cage surrounding said male member, and [[said]]

~~at least one~~ each of the metal ~~strip strips~~ being received in ~~said at least one recess of the~~ plurality of recesses.

Claim 6 (cancelled)

Claim 7 (cancelled)

Claim 8 (cancelled)

Claim 9 (previously presented) A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column as claimed in claim 1, wherein
said male member has blunt surfaces.

Claim 10 (cancelled)

Claim 11 (cancelled)

Claim 12 (previously presented) A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column as claimed in claim 5, wherein
said male member has blunt surfaces.